

BANKS NAMED AVAPCD'S FIRST OPERATIONS MANAGER

The AVAPCD is pleased to announce that long-time Antelope Valley resident Bret Banks has been appointed Operations Manager by the District's Governing Board.

Banks is the first appointee to the newly-created, full-time position which he assumed on May 8. As Operations Manager for the District, Banks will have primary responsibility for overseeing day-to-day operations at the AVAPCD's Lancaster headquarters. Bank's duties will include supervising the District's permit program, enforcing its rules and regulations, administering its budget, representing the District during inter-agency and legislative meetings, and consulting with permit holders and the public on air pollution issues.

"Bret's strong background in air quality, his extensive knowledge of the AVAPCD's programs and his experience interfacing with regulatory agencies provide him with unique qualifications for his new position," commented Frank Roberts, Governing Board Chair. He added that Banks "familiarity with the Antelope Valley's air issues and the local community make him a valuable addition to the AVAPCD."

Prior to his arrival at the District, Banks was employed by Lockheed Martin Skunk Works in Palmdale for more than ten years. During his tenure with the local aerospace company, Banks served as a Materials and Process Engineer, as an Environmental Control Specialist and most recently, as the Environmental Supervisor responsible for supervising the facility's air quality, water quality and hazardous waste compliance group. Banks also served as the primary regulatory liaison between Lockheed and the California Air Resources Board, the AVAPCD, the South Coast AQMD and other regulatory agencies. Prior to his tenure with Lockheed, Banks was employed by Dionex Corporation as a Technical Specialist and by Hewlett Packard Corporation as an Analytical Chemist.

Banks' qualifications also include chairing the Antelope Valley Board of Trade's Air Quality Task Force. The Task Force was formed in 1991 to address local concerns about the practicality of applying the same regulatory requirements to Antelope Valley businesses as those required for industries in the polluted Los Angeles basin. Largely as a result of the Task Force's efforts, the

AVAPCD was created as a separate and locally controlled agency on July 1, 1997. Subsequently, the Governing Board appointed Banks to a two year term on the Hearing Board, which makes determinations on permit appeals and petitions for variances submitted by local businesses.

Banks holds a Bachelors of Science Degree in Microbiology/Chemistry from California Polytechnic State University in San Luis Obispo, and has completed course work towards a Masters of Science degree in Environmental Sciences at California State University at Northridge. Banks has lived in the Antelope Valley for almost 30 years, and currently makes his home in Palmdale with his wife Suzanne, and their two children.

Banks will report to Air Pollution Control Officer (APCO) Chuck Fryxell through Deputy APCO Eldon Heaston, both of whom also administer the Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District (MDAQMD) in Victorville. The AVAPCD is currently operated under the terms of a full-service contract with the MDAQMD, a relationship which is expected to continue into the near future.

“As a long time resident of the Antelope Valley, I am excited to have the opportunity to bring more local control to the air quality concerns of the Antelope Valley,” Banks said. “The most exciting part of the job is the ability to work with new and existing businesses in the Antelope Valley to develop common sense, cost effective air quality strategies to allow businesses to grow and flourish.”

“I look forward to maintaining the District’s strong existing programs to ensure the Antelope Valley continues to make progress toward meeting all mandated air quality standards,” Banks added.

Banks’ appointment to the position of Operations Manager is the latest milestone in the AVAPCD’s brief but prolific history. Other significant achievements include:

- ☞ The development of a separate and distinct rulebook specific to the Antelope Valley;
- ☞ Senator William “Pete” Knight’s introduction of Senate Bill 1459, which aims to reclassify the AVAPCD as an independent air quality management district (AQMD). If passed, the bill would become law on January 1, 2001;
- ☞ The cleanest ozone season in the Antelope Valley’s recent history. The AVAPCD ended 1999 without a single exceedance of the .12 parts per million federal ozone standard;

- Recission of Rule 2202 - the mandatory SCAQMD “Rideshare Rule”- and its subsequent replacement with a voluntary transportation outreach program;
- 👉 Over \$850,000 in DMV surcharge fee funds awarded locally by the AVAPCD for the construction of alternative fueling infrastructure in the Antelope Valley;
- 👉 Participation in several historic air quality studies, including the 1997 Southern California Ozone Study, and the Children’s Health and endotoxins studies, which are currently underway at the Lancaster air monitoring station;
- 👉 Establishment of a comprehensive education and outreach program which has already reached more than 40,000 residents via community events, school and career day presentations, an annual poster contest and the AIRE Awards, in conjunction with the widespread distribution of air quality publications aimed at local businesses, the media and the public at large.